More Indictments to Be Sought

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Oct. 1—Alabama authorities are planning to seek indictments within the next few weeks against as many as four person they now believe they can prove were involved in the 1963 bombing in the 16th Street Baptist Church here which killed four young black girls, knowledgeable sources said today.

The men were part of a group of radical segregationists who split off from the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1950s and early 1960s because they felt the Klan was not taking strong enough action to back up its white supremacist views, the sources said.

The Cox newspapers reported today that former Atlanta police Capt. Everette Little told a reporter a group calling itself Nacirema—Americans-pelled backwards—had been foiled in an effort to blow up predominantly black Atlanta University in the late 1950s with a stolen van load of dynamite.

Little, now chief of police in Symrna, Ga., said the group was "too extreme" for the Klan and was foiled in its attempt by heavy police surveillance of some of its members. Little could not be reached today but he told the Cox reporter he might be called here to Birmingham to testify on the group's connection to bombings in this area.

One person, 73-year-old Robert Edward Chambliss of Birmingham, has already been charged with four counts of murder in connection with the 16th Street bombing by the Jefferson County grand jury. The jury of 14 whites and four blacks has been looking into nearly 50 bombings that took place around Birmingham in the 1950s and 1960s.

Sources said the investigators have been able to identify persons responsible for about a half-dozen Birmingham bombings in addition to the 16th Street blast. One of those that has been "solved," the sources said, was a powerful dynamite and shrapnel charge set off in a Birmingham vacant lot after a smaller explosion drew police and local black residents to the scene.

Although there is no statute of limitations in Alabama on the bombing of inhabited buildings, in most cases, the bombings being investigated do not fall into the category. Alabama law limits prosectuion in bombings of uninhabited buildings to 10 years.

Investigators have used the evidence in the bombings to "pyramid" their investigation against the persons responsilbe for the 16th Street blast, according to sources.

"The 16th Street bombing is the one this whole investigation is all about," said one state official, who asked not to be named. "The tactic has been to use information from the other bombings to force the people involved to tell us more about 16th Street."

Sources said, several of those who are suspects in the 16th Street Baptist Church dynamiting were also apparently involved in other bombings in the area.

The 16th Street bombing was one of the ugliest incidents of violence to occur during the tortuous process of desegregating the South. The church was bombed at 10:22 a.m. Sept. 15, 1963, and four choirgirls were killed in the explosion.

Several of those who were believed by investigators to have been involved in the blast have died, sources said,

in '63 Birmingham Bombing

including one Birmingham man who apparently made the dynamite bomb at his home.

The investigation into the Birmingham bombings has been led by Alabama Attorney General William Baxley. The 35-year-old outspoken state official has been mentioned as a prime candidate for next year's Alabama governor's race and has been accused by some detractors of using the bombings to further his political career.

Baxley denied political motivation for his investigation during an interview in his office this week. "I felt very strongly about the 16th Street bombing when it happened," he said. "I know it sounds corny but I promised myself to do something about it even back then when I was still in law school."

What Baxley has done is make the search for the 16th Street bombers into a virtual crusade since he took office in 1971. Investigators from both the state and the Birmingham police department have questioned persons believed connected with the bombing from coast to coast, Baxley said.

A key element in the investigation has been the release of nearly 200 volumes of information compiled on the bombings in Birminham and elsewhere in the area by the FBI. A former Birmingham detective, who worked for years on the 16th Street bombing case, said in an interview this week that the FBI was the only law enforcement agency to compile full investigative records on the case.

The FBI records were released by the Justice Department to Baxley and city police here in 1975—four years after Baxley requested them.

Federal officials who have seen the records said the FBI apparently was never able to determine who was responsible for the 16th Street bombing. Baxley said, however, that the FBI records did provide crucial backup evidence to get his investigation moving after it had ground to a near halt in 1975.

Since then investigators have determined that a relatively small group of perhaps no more than 30 persons was responsible for virtually all of the bombings around Bcrmingham during the late 1950s and early 1960s. About 20 of those persons are still alive, said Baxley.

The only other person besides Chambliss to be indicted so far by the grand jury here on a bombing charge is J.B. Stoner, a self-proclaimed white racist and the head of the National States Rights Party.

Stoner was indicted this week in connection with a 1958 bombinf of the Bethel Baptist Church here. No one was injured in that bombing and some authorities have indicated that the charge against Stoner may not stand up under the state's statute of limitation regulations.

Sources familiar with the investigation into the bombings said that although Stoner was in Birmingham at the time of the 16th Street bombing in 1963, he did not take part in that incident. However, they said Stoner's indictment was designed as much as an effort at psychological warfare against others involved in bombings as it was to convict the arch-segregationist.

"Stoner is a symbol," said one source. "A lot of these people look on him as the most hardnosed guy of all. If we can get him, then it's a signal to all those other guys that we can get them, too."